

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 L-01 H-01

PRS-01 INR-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 EB-03 SCS-01 OFA-01

/044 W

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P R 151710Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4830

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 1844

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EFIS EC US

SUBJECT: NEPTUNE INCIDENT: NAVATT INTERVIEW WITH ADMIRAL VASQUEZ

REF: QUITO 1841

1. AS REPORTED REFTTEL, NAVATT DELIVERED LETTER REGARDING NEPTUNE INCIDENT TO ADMIRAL VASQUEZ, CNO ECUADOREAN NAVY, AT 5:00 P.M. MARCH 14. ADMIRAL VASQUEZ FIRST READ THE LETTER IN ITS ENTIRETY IN BOTH ENGLISH AND INFORMAL SPANISH VERSION AND THEN CALLED FOR HIS FILE ON THE SUBJECT. HE SHOWED NAVATT THE REPORT HE PERSONALLY HAD PREPARED AND SENT TO THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE (AND ACTING PRESIDENT) ON MARCH 7 CONCERNING THE INCIDENT.

2. WHEN READING THE LIST OF ARTICLES AND EQUIPMENT LOST, VASQUEZ SAID THAT HE HAD ADDITIONAL BILLS FOR ARTICLES AND EQUIPMENT DESTROYED BY THE FISHERMEN AND HIS BILLS, LIKE OURS, COULD NOT BE TOTALLY PROVED. IN ANY EVENT, HE CONSIDERED HIS BILL CANCELLED OUR BILL.

3. VASQUEZ ASKED NAVATT TO TELL AMBASSADOR THAT WITH RESPECT TO THE TUNA VESSELS THE ECUADOREAN NAVY HAD ACTED

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IN A MANNER WHICH WOULD MINIMIZE THE SITUATION; THAT HE

HAD PERSONALLY INTERVENED TO INSURE THAT THE THREE MEN CHARGED WITH ASSAULT WERE LET OFF LIGHTLY (TWO WERE RELEASED; ONE WAS SENTENCED TO FIVE DAYS IMPRISONMENT) INSTEAD OF BEING GIVEN THE THREE TO FIVE YEARS IMPRISONMENT PROVIDED BY LAW; AND THAT HE HAD INTERVENED TO INSURE THE EXPEDITIOUS DEPARTURE OF THE VESSELS WHEN THE NEPTUNE INCIDENT HAD MADE IT SEEM THAT THEY MIGHT BE DELAYED (SEE GUAYAQUIL 428). FINALLY, VASQUEZ SAID THAT THE WHOLE SITUATION WAS AN UNFORTUNATE ONE WHICH NEITHER HIS COUNTRY NOR THE US HAD DESIRED, THAT THE ENTIRE MATTER SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO A CLOSE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND THAT HE WOULD LOOK INTO THE NEPTUNE MATTER FURTHER BASED ON THE NAVATT'S LETTER.

4. FULL MEMCON BEING POUCHED.

5. COMMENT: THE FACT IS THAT THE NAVY COMMAND IN QUITO, USUALLY IN THE PERSON OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF BUT UNDER VASQUEZ' DIRECTION, DID COOPERATE CLOSELY AND FULLY WITH US THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE TIME THE FISHING VESSELS WERE DETAINED. THE NAVY CLEARLY SHARED OUR OBJECTIVE OF TRYING TO AVOID INCIDENTS AND EXPEDITE THE DEPARTURE OF THE BOATS. ON REPEATED OCCASIONS I SENT NAVATT RALPH TO THE NAVY TO MAKE SPECIFIC REQUESTS: REDUCE GUARDS, REDUCE THEIR WEAPONRY, LIFT RADIO SILENCE, MOVE SHIPS, OVER-RULE THE DIRECTORATE OF FISHERIES IN GUAYAQUIL, ETC. THE NAVY WAS PROMPT IN RESPONDING AFFIRMATIVELY IN EACH CASE.

6. WITH RESPECT TO THE INVESTIGATION ITSELF, I BELIEVE VASQUEZ WILL CARRY OUT HIS COMMITMENT.  
BREWSTER

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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